



Official Publication of the Minnesota Transportation Museum, Inc.

March - April 1977



...Along the Como-Harriet Line, you'll meet.....
RAY AND CASEY BENSEN.

While Ray Bensen, Senior, watches for more customers at our street-car line 42nd St. station (left), 'Casey' (Ray Jr.) helps to man the M.T.M. booth at the recent Woodcraft Hobby Show.

Stories on pages five and six.

Official Publication of The Minnesota Transportation Museum, Inc.



MINNEGAZETTE

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All material for publication should be addressed to the Editor, Gordon Frederick, 8680 Cedar Ave. S., Apt. 201, Bloomington, Minnesota 55420

The PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Our membership continues to grow. This year, over 230 individuals are listed on the M.T.M. roster, an all time high! I'm confident that our membership will continue to increase in the future as we expand our operation at Lake Harriet and include additional steam railroad preservation in our museum program.

At our next general membership meeting on March 29, 1977, a steam site development committee (or 'task force') will be formed and will consist of any and all M.T.M.ers who are genuinely interested and willing to participate in this important phase of our museum activities. This committee will investigate and prepare concrete proposals for two possible steam operating sites. The first is the C.&N.W. trackage along the Mississippi River near Lilydale. The second is the trackage and right-of-way extending from the Minnehaha Station in South Minneapolis to Fort Snelling State Park. Both of these sites meet the criteria that we, as a museum, have established regarding steam operation. We must act this year to focus our attention on the one site which has the greatest potential. I urge everyone who is interested, especially those who have not yet become M.T.M. members, to join us and get involved.

Good news: The Minnesota Historical Society has announced that M.T.M. will receive a \$3280 grant to complete the restoration work on Dan Patch #100. We are most grateful for the Society's assistance; especially when one considers that it would take nearly 20,000 paying passengers on the Como-Harriet Line to equal the amount of the grant. In addition, the Minnesota Historic Sites

Review Board, by unanimous vote at their January meeting, nominated the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line, and our ever faithful #1300 for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination will be forwarded to Washington and we should get the results sometime during the coming operating season.

Congratulations are in order for George Isaacs, who was re-elected to the M.T.M. Board of Directors for a second term as a Director-at-Large. His leadership, advice, and enthusiasm, as well as his active participation on our board is appreciated by all of us. Also, we owe a vote of thanks to our 'retiring' Directors at Large, namely John Larkin, and Russ Olson, who, while remaining active in M.T.M. affairs and activities, will finally get a well deserved rest; again, our thanks.

Remember, the continued success of M.T.M. depends solely upon the active participation of our membership in all Museum activities. Join in, do what you can, and have fun.

See you on March 29.

Thanks,

Frank Sandberg, President.

ATTENTION ALL TWIN CITY AREA MEMBERS...

With the arrival of the warm weather in March (hopefully), you can expect to receive the 'annual' questionnaire sent out by three of your MTM officers. It is most important to the continued success of MTM that you PROMPTLY fill out the form as soon as possible and return it in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. From these returns, our Vice Presidents of Vehicle Restoration (Como Shops), Construction and Maintenance (CHSL, and Vehicle Operations-#1300 operating crews) make up their work schedules for the coming summer. Prompt return of the questionnaire will insure your getting in on the fun from the start and will get MTM off to a great start in 1977.

Steve Olson, Ken Snyder,
Scott Heiderich

OPERATING #1300 DURING THE 1977 SEASON

Looking ahead to the coming operating season, there are a few additions to the 'old ways' in sight. The basic operating scheme and schedule will remain as it was last year, operating daily, Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend, with Saturdays and Sundays in May, September and October. With about 60 operators, you can expect to be asked to operate about twice per month. In an attempt to improve our image, we will secure hats similar to those presently being worn for those who don't have one. The uniform will be re-emphasized, but not to the point of making it mandatory. We can expect to add a loading platform on our continuously expanding northern extension near Lake Calhoun. We will definitely have a re-training program for all operators before opening day to give everyone a chance to re-familiarize themselves with #1300 and our operating sequence. The emphasis will be on SAFETY and maintenance saving operating techniques. Be sure to mail in your questionnaire, and we'll see you all in a few weeks to begin a most promising 1977 season.

Scott Heiderich
Vice President
Vehicle Operations

FLASH!!!

PARK BOARD APPROVES NEW NORTHERN EXTENSION...

On February 23, the Minneapolis Park Board unanimously approved the new northern extension of our Como-Harriet line to a point just short of 36th Street, to include suitable turning facilities and a passing track. All details will be worked out between the M.T.M. and the Park Board Staff. For the extension location, see the map in the previous Minnegazette (p.4). Details will be discussed at the March General Membership Meeting. DON'T MISS IT!!!

ATTENTION!!!

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, 8:00pm
Tuesday, March 29, 1977, at the
Northwestern National Life
Insurance Co. auditorium, Washing-
ton Av., S. (at Nicollet Mall),
in Downtown Minneapolis.

COMO SHOPS ORIENTATION

Restoration work at the shops is coming along nicely. The Dan Patch #100 should be completed this summer, hopefully in June. The #265 is taking shape and the triple combine will undergo some major rejuvenation this April due to the availability of services and equipment.

The steam engine #328 is slated to begin intensive restoration on completion of the #100. There will be minor work done on the engine before June, so if you are interested, come on out.

For those of you who would like to come out but do not know what to do or how to do it, we have a solution. On April 2 and May 14, there will be shop orientation sessions. We will discuss what has been done, what needs to be done, how to do it, use of tools and equipment, shop safety, etc. Starting in April, there will be a job list posted by the work room door. From April to September, there will be work crews forming on Wednesday nights, Saturdays and often on Sunday.

When you come to the shop, dress for the weather. We do have heated areas when it is cool outside. Try to wear boots or heavy shoes and clothing you don't mind if it gets dirty.

Restoration needs workers as well as money. Please lend a hand. We always have a good time, and it's not all work. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 825-6120. The shop now has a telephone. You can find out if anyone is working by calling the shop at 646-9502.

Steve Olson
Vice President,
Vehicle Restoration.

...AND A HINT FROM HEIDERICH...

HERE
IS
YOUR
SPECIAL
TUIT ! ➔



(cut it out and keep it handy)

At last we have them, and in sufficient quantity for each of our members to have one for his or her very own!

These TUITs are not easily obtainable, and the round ones are really hard

to find. However, now that we have them, all of our problems should be over. We should no longer hear remarks such as "I will go out to the Como Shops and do some restoration work as soon as I get a round TUIT", or, "I'll get out to a CHSL work session when I get a round TUIT". These quotes should be a thing of the past, for now you each have a TUIT for your very own, and it is, after all, a round TUIT.

We are looking forward to great results now that these have been distributed to every one of our members.



WHO'S WHO ALONG THE COMO-HARRIET LINE...

One of the things we hope to accomplish as editor of the Minnegazette is to help our members to get to know each other just a little bit better. We'll do this through an occasional "Along the Como-Harriet Line..." article, in which any MTM member in reasonably good standing is fair game for your snoopy editor.

But we also thought that our new members in particular would like to meet the folks they have elected to guide our activities through the coming year. So here are your MTM officers for 1977, photographed at the February board meeting.

Left to right we have Ken Snyder, VP, Construction and Maintenance, Frank Sandberg, President, Dave Norman, Secretary, Scott Heiderich, VP, Vehicle Operations (seated), Steve Olson, VP, Vehicle Restoration, Bill Graham, Executive VP, and last but certainly not least, Bob Macnie, Treasurer. Not included here are Norm Podas, VP, Public Education, George Isaacs, Director, and finally your fearless editor, whose mug shot will crop up elsewhere on these pages.

So, if you have any ideas, comments, questions, gripes, or even praise, these are the folks to talk to.

M.T.M. SHOWS OFF...

...at the Woodcraft Annual Model Railroad Show at the Har-Mar Mall on January 30. Shows like this are a great opportunity, not only to tell the general public about our Museum, but to meet other folks who share our interest in railroading.

'Casey' Bensen and Loren Martin were the fellows who manned the MTM display booth, dispensing brochures and answering questions for the crowds that attended. Loren and Casey, along with Judy Sandberg and Scott Heiderich did most of the organizing of this affair. Bob Macnie was there, and Bill Cordes brought along his movies of Museum activities. Even your Editor showed up with his multimedia Electric Railroading show, which, however, failed to go on as planned (though not QUITE as disastrously as shown in the sketch).

Meanwhile, down the hall a piece, were Bill Olsen, Dave Norman, and Russ Olson, displaying and operating their O scale streetcar models, as well as telling visitors about Russ' book. Several models of Twin Cities streetcars were operated on the beautifully detailed model railroads, including a scaled down '1300' car. Bill was also one of the

winners of prizes awarded to exhibitors at the show.

And just in case there are any model trolley enthusiasts in our ranks who haven't yet got the word, Bill Olsen is hosting 'TROLLEY FEST '77', scheduled for September 23 to 25 at the Curtis Hotel. Fellow model traction men from throughout the Midwest are expected to attend, so it should be quite a show! Better call Bill now at 920-3887 if you want to join the fun.



Loren Martin and 'Casey' Bensen (in M.T.M. motormen's uniforms) man the Museum booth at Har-Mar.



Bill Olsen and his 'Weightless, Noisy Car Co.' operating model streetcar display at hobby show.

ALONG THE COMO-HARRIET LINE YOU'LL MEET...

RAY AND 'CASEY' BENSEN

For many of our members, the Minnesota Transportation Museum is a family affair. Just one example is the hard working father and son team of Ray Bensen and his son Ray Jr., known to one and all as 'Casey'.

Ray Senior traces his interest in railroading back to the year 1931, when he joined the old Minneapolis and St. Louis railroad. The 'Minnie and Louie' had been in difficult financial straits for some time when Ray began his long career as the office boy to the Receiver. A sudden recovery saved the M&St.L from liquidation, and Ray remained with that road for four years.

In June of 1935, Ray switched to the Soo Line Railroad, where he's been ever since, with the exception of a three year stint in the Navy during World War II. Ray's career at the Soo has always been centered in the Traffic Department. Working his way up through the ranks of the union, he has held jobs in every section of that department. Finally, Ray was promoted to management, where today he is the Soo Line's Manager of Rate Quotations.

Although Ray was one of the charter members of the Minnesota Transportation Museum when it was formed in 1961, his interest in the preservation and restoration of Car 1300 goes back much further. The senior Bensen recalls car 1300's original acquisition by the Minnesota Railfan's Association back in June of 1954. Negotiations to obtain the old streetcar had been completed just prior to the Twin City Rapid Transit Company's final phases of bus conversion.

Car 1300 moved around a lot in the years before the Museum established her present home on the Como-Harriet line. At first the car remained at the TCRT's Snelling shops. But the bus company wanted the car removed, so a new home was located at the Minneapolis Moline Implement Company's plant in Hopkins. Ray recalls that the Milwaukee Road, which arranged to move the car, had to design a special set of couplers

to haul the car. Then an air hose had to be run through the trolley to connect the train line with the freight cars behind. 1300 remained at the siding of Minneapolis Moline for five or six years, while some painting and other restoration work was done from time to time.

When Minneapolis Moline was taken over by White Motor, our streetcar was once again without a home. This time, she was moved to the roundhouse of the Minnesota Transfer Railway. During this period, some fantrips were actually run, thanks to the use of a motor-generator set mounted on an old railroad pushcar which was towed behind the trolley. Ray recalls that the lines of folks waiting for a ride on old 1300 often stretched for three blocks.

In 1961, Ray was one of the members of the Minnesota Railfan's Association who got together to form the present Minnesota Transportation Museum. Since then, of course, our association has grown tremendously, with Car 1300 finally coming out to the Lake Harriet Line in 1969.

Casey (Ray Jr.) has been a lifelong railfan. In fact, he took his first railfan trip when he was six weeks old, his father tells us. Together, this father and son team has travelled over thousands of miles of railroad throughout the United States and Canada.

Ray says their most interesting trip was on the Milwaukee Road, which supplied three 50 foot flat cars for the fans in addition to the usual coaches. With all that train riding, the Bensons have yet to encounter a mishap. But they do recall two trips on the old Burlington that wound up taking considerably longer than originally planned. On one trip, the steam locomotive simply ran out of fuel, and they wound up parked on a siding for the night. On the second trip, the main line was blocked by a wreck, and once again, most of the railfans aboard (including the Bensons) remained aboard the train for the night.

Ray and 'Casey' Bensen - two of the many interesting people you'll meet along the Como-Harriet line.



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

PO Box 16509
Minneapolis, MN 55416-0509
www.TrolleyRide.org

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